# A Study of English Accent: Attitudes of Chinese Undergraduate English-major Students in Southwest Forestry University in China

## Zhongyu Wang

Graduate Student of Human Sciences,
Assumption University, Thailand
wangzhongyu55@gmail.com

==================================================================

**Abstract**

The development of World English (WE) and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) in recent decades caused the attitudes towards English ownership, English standard and English teaching model to change. In the complicated English situation in China, it is worthwhile to investigate Chinese EFL learners' English accent attitudes. This study explored 96 Chinese undergraduate English-major students' attitudes towards English accents including their own English accents using listening test, questionnaire and semi-structure interview. The data were analyzed from learners' knowledge, emotion and behavior about English varieties and their own English accents, as well as related factors. The results showed that even most participants were aware of the extent of English varieties. They had an ambivalent attitude to English accents and greatly influenced by standard English ideology. The findings also revealed some limitations of English teaching models and policies in China.

**Keywords:** World English (WE), accent, attitude, China.

**Introduction**

With the rapid improvement of the globalization in the fields of political, economic, cultural, academic, development or others, the significance of the role of English is increasing in the world. English is as an international language (EIL) which is used as a tool of international and intercultural communication. The emergence of paradigms of World English (WE) and English as a lingua franca (ELF) caused the change of attitudes towards English ownership and English standards. It broke the prejudice and stereotyping of English accents of native speakers (NSs) and non-native speakers (NNSs). However, the NS ideology still exists in education and society, Received Pronunciation (RP) and General American (GA) are the main English teaching model in China (Kung and Wang, 2018). Language attitude is a context-based personal emotion and shaped with the knowledge and experience with language varieties

==================================================================
**Language in India** www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 20:9 September 2020**
Zhongyu Wang
A Study of English Accent: Attitudes of Chinese Undergraduate English-major Students in Southwest Forestry University in China                    1

(Kristiansen, 1991). Given the situation in China, it is still worth to investigate Chinese English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' English accent attitudes.

Language attitudes can be as a representation of such English linguistic variation and change (Garrett, 2010). In addition, language attitude can reflect learners' use of the language in current and in the future and influence their motivation (Galloway &Rose, 2015). Therefore, attitudes towards different English accents, especially Native Englishes (NE) and Non-Native Englishes (NNE) becomes the key aspect of sociolinguistic research (Jenkins, 2007). The research findings in recent decades showed that the majority of NNESs preferred NS accents and are still deeply influenced by standard English ideology (Holliday, 2005; Jenkins, 2007, 2009; Timmis, 2012; Fang, 2016). As for their own English accent, most of them showed a negative attitude (Jinkins, 2005; Bian, 2009; Fang; 2017).

In China, the findings showed that the majority Chinese EFL learners preferred NS accents, especially American English (AmE) and British English (BrE) (He and Li 2009; Hu, 2004; Kunschak and Fang 2008; Wang, 2015). A few studies research the Chinese learners' attitudes towards their own English accent (Bian, 2009; Fang, 2016). The results showed that the majority of Chinese EFL learners were not satisfied with their less-standard English pronunciation. Studies still rarely research Chinese English-major students' attitude to English varieties and their own English accent. To fill the gap, this research will focus on Chinese-English-major students, to investigate their attitudes toward English accents.

## Review of Literature
### WE/ELF

To describe the spreading and sociolinguistic profile of English, many scholars (Strevens, 1980; McArthur, 1985; Kachru, 1992; Gorlach, 1990; Yano, 2001; Jenkins, 2009) have proposed models to show how English spread gradually around the world from different aspects. Kachru's (1992) Three-Circles Model is seen as the most useful and influential model. According to Kachru (1992), English was categorized within inner, outer and expanding circles in this model. The inner-circle refers to the traditional cultural and linguistic bases of English (e.g. America, Britain and Australia). The outer-circle represents the non-native regions where English is institutionalized as they were colonized in the past (e.g. India, Singapore, and Malaysia), while the expanding-circle comprises countries where English is usually used in EFL context (e.g. China, Russia, and Japan). Kachru's model of WE showed the three main classifications of Englishes and indicated that the Englishes in outer and expanding circles have their own values as a way to show people's social identities (Kachru, 1992).

===============================================================
**Language in India** www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 20:9 September 2020**
Zhongyu Wang
A Study of English Accent: Attitudes of Chinese Undergraduate English-major Students in Southwest Forestry University in China          2

With the research on WE more deeply, the limitations of Kachru's model are noted. On one hand, it still followed the geography rather than English using of speakers, it seems to state the English using is the same for the English speakers in the same circle. Actually, English is as the L1 of some English speakers in the outer-circle like Singapore, while English speakers from the expanding circles may use English extensively, communicating with NSs and even more with NNSs (same or different native speakers). Besides, many English users grow in a bilingual or multilingual surroundings, which makes it difficult to describe their L1, L2 and L3.

On the other hand, there are still some unclear areas between circles. For example, when speakers in outer circle become the functional native speakers as Singapore English, Malaysia English and India English have been institutionalized, they have their own standards rather than the native English standards (Kachru, 2005). Besides, English as mother tongue for some people in expanding circle, the population mobility in inner circle challenged Kachru's three circles model. It is incorrect to simply distinguish native speakers by geographical categories of inter, outer and expending circles (Crystal, 2003).

**Standard English (SE)**

The English ownership and standard of English are regarded as the vital issues of World English (Haberland, 2011). In the terms of 'Standard English', it is mostly applied for educated usage in writing and grammar forms rather than pronunciation (Trudgill, 1984; Strevens, 1985, Trudgill & Hannah, 2008). The role of English is not limited use by NSs, it is more used by NNSs and as a lingua franca. Therefore, there is no one English accent with the reliable criteria and rational to be the standard for all the English users (Foley, 2013).

Because of the geography, political and social factors, there were some dialects or English varieties emerged. For example, accents of the rural and urban area, wealthy class and middle class, even different parts in England can be different. In the history, a standard English was tried to be used in some context such as dictionary, printing press and education. Among that, RP adopted in the earlier Compulsory schooling and as the wealthy accent and 'London accent' employed in BBC company are influential until now (Galloway & Rose, 2015). The social media augmented impaction and prestige of these accent, which lead many people abandon their own accent. However, with the establishment of WE and ELF, the ideology of Standard English has been criticized. All the English varieties should be legitimacy and hold the equal value.

Nowadays, in some outer and expending circle countries including China, the standard

====================================================================
**Language in India** www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 20:9 September 2020**
Zhongyu Wang
A Study of English Accent: Attitudes of Chinese Undergraduate English-major Students in Southwest Forestry University in China          3

English ideology is still embedded in the education and society. The English teaching model limitedly adopting GA and RP. Meanwhile, GA and RP widely used in social media resulted learners' stereotypes about target language and culture. This language ideology can be reflected from their language attitudes and behavior.

**China English (CE)**

If India is the representative of the outer circle, China is definitely a representative of expanding circle. Mainland China has the largest population of English learners in the world (Crystal, 2008). The English language first arrived in China in the 17th century, then it was used by traders as a Chinese Pidgin English as the result of language contact in Macao and Guangzhou, and later Shanghai (Bolton 2003). The term "China English" has recently been used by some Chinese researchers dealing with WE/ELF/EIL (Li, 2019). However, there are still some arguments about the terms used. Li (2006) distinguishes CE and Chinglish and point out that CE is a normative English, whereas Chinglish refers to a language impacted deeply by Chinese language and violates the using habit and structure of English. As for the term 'Chinese English', is regard as a defective language mixed with Chinese and English (Jiang, 2002). The characteristics of "China English" are *"*used to confirm that 'China English,' as a legitimate variety does exist, that it exhibits features of linguistic creativity rather than interference, suggesting a nativized educated variety" (Margie, 2011, cited in Li, 2019, p. 3).

'China English' is a specific form of English, which is the pronunciation that the listener perceives that the speaker deviates from the phonetic norm of English due to the influence of Chinese phonetic system when speaking English, which is reflected in the phonetic features, syllable structure and supra-segmental features (He & Li, 2009). Some of the Chinese students' CE pronunciation characteristics which affect the intelligibility should be noticed (Deterding & Kirkpatrik, 2006; Deterding, 2010).

1. use /s/ instead of /z/;
2. ellipsis end sound /n/;
3. /n/ and /l/ confusion;
4. vowel sound length and sound quality;
5. word stress in the end of sentence.

These pronunciation features should be the key point in Chinese students' English phonetics teaching. However, some pronunciation characteristics such as /th/ sound, vowel simplification, rhythm and intonation do not affect the intelligibility. From these researches on

===============================================================================
**Language in India** www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 20:9 September 2020**
Zhongyu Wang
A Study of English Accent: Attitudes of Chinese Undergraduate English-major Students in Southwest Forestry University in China          4

CE, it can be known that it is a reality that 'China English' accent objectively exists and is as a member of WE family (Pan, 2002; Jiang & Du, 2003; Hu,2004; Wu, 2004).

## Methodology

## Participants

This research was conducted in Southwest Forestry University (SFU) which is located in Kunming City, Yunnan province, China. A purposive sampling method was used to select subjects to join this research. The 96 undergraduate English-major students from sophomore and junior in SFU in China was selected to be the subjects for they may know more about the concepts of WE and ELF than freshmen and be available on campus most of the time, which ensured the possibility of subject access. Most of the participants came from Yunnan province, while the others from other different provinces in China. Besides, there were a few minority students who can speak minority languages, which enriched the local dialects and languages among students' China English. 35 of the participants were sophomores, made up of 4 males and 31 females. The other 61 participants were from junior, made up of 8 males and 53 females. There were total of 12 male and 84 female respondents ranged from 18-22 years-old.

## Research Design

This study used a mixed-method sequential explanatory design to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. Three data collection instruments were designed and adopted in this research: listening-test, questionnaire and semi-structured interview.

## Listening Test

A listening test method was used to test the extent that the participants identify different English accents. Audio clips constituted with different English accents featuring from broadcast news coupling with five countries: US, UK, Singapore, Thailand and China are selected to facilitate their choices. To control the variables, the five speakers in audio clips were males with similar age, social status and education degree and speak in a formal context in English. After listening to each clip, participants were required to identify the country of the speaker (Appendix 1).

## Questionnaire

To answer the second research question (RQ) and RQ 3, a bilingual English Chinese questionnaire was administered. The questionnaire was constituted with three parts: (1) general background information, (2) English accent preference, (3) attitudes to their own English accent. Part 2 was adopted from Wang (2015), a five-point Likert scale was employed to

===============================================================================
**Language in India** www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 20:9 September 2020**
Zhongyu Wang
A Study of English Accent: Attitudes of Chinese Undergraduate English-major Students in
Southwest Forestry University in China                     5

investigate Chinese English-major students' English accent preference. This part is made up of 23 statements (S) which consisted with English accent learning preference, native English accent learning motivation, attitude to teachers' accent, English pleasant quality and standard English accent.

All questions in part 3 adopted from Fang (2017) were used to explore participants' attitudes to own English accent. There were three items: 1. own English accents description 2. satisfaction degree, 3. aspired English accent. Some supplement questions such as reason of satisfaction degrees are used to get students' additional information. In the end of the questionnaire, students are required to provide their contact way if they want to join the next semi-structural interview (Appendix 2).

**Semi-structure Interview**

Based on the questionnaire answers, 4 sophomores and 4 junior students with different backgrounds and English accent attitudes were selected as the subjects of the semi-structure interview. The semi-structured interview can both help the interviewees understand the questions deeply and guide their attitudes more flexibly (Rubin and Rubin, 2012). The questions (Q) 1-3 adopted from Kung and Wang (2018) used to explore Chinese students' English accent preference and reasons, while Qs 4-6 taken from Fang (2017) used to explore their attitudes to own English accent and reasons.

The listening audio clips, statements and questions in questionnaire and semi-structure interview were sent to three qualified experts from different countries to confirm the reliability of the instruments. After the questionnaire and semi-structure interview being revised according to the experts' recommendations, the audio clips were piloted with 8 students to test if they can understand the content of the audio clips. As for the questionnaire, the Cronbach's alpha was 0.871, which indicated high validity (Appendix 3).

**Data Collection and Analysis**

Before answering the questions, the purpose, significance and the procedure of this research were introduced to the participants. The listening test and questionnaire were sent to participants online and last for two weeks through Wenjuanxin (Sojump.com) which is a reliable online tool for questionnaire data collection and analysis. Firstly, students were asked to do the listening test, which was followed by a questionnaire. After completing the questionnaire, they were required to write down their contact information in the final of the questionnaire if they volunteer to join the interview. All the interviewees were asked and

======================================================================
**Language in India** www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 20:9 September 2020**
Zhongyu Wang
A Study of English Accent: Attitudes of Chinese Undergraduate English-major Students in Southwest Forestry University in China                    6

answer the questions in Chinese through voice call, which were recorded with the participants' permission. Then, the Chinese text content was sent to the reputable translation service to translate to English. To ensure the translation accuracy, a back translation in Chinese-English-Chinese (Li, 2016) was employed.

The statistical data collected from listening test and questionnaire were analyzed with the tool of SPSS 20.0, while semi-structure interview data was analyzed with qualitative content analysis.

## Results

## Listening Test

All the English accents can be identified by half or more respondents, except Singapore English accent (40.6%). Among these five English accents, Thai English (ThE) can be identified by most participants (72.92%), followed by American English (AmE) (60.25%), British English (BrE) (56.25%), China English (CE) (50%), Singapore English (SiE) (40.6%). This may be because ThE has significate characteristics comparing with the other four English accents. In addition, many respondents confused AmE and BrE accents, CE and SiE accents. This maybe because most Singaporeans are English-Chinese bilingual or multilinguals, both the Chinese and Singaporean speakers' English accents have similar Chinese language's characteristics.

All the percentages of students who can identify native and non-native English accents correctly are quite high, especially AmE and BrE (91.67%, 89.59% respectively). In conclusion, the participants' ability to identify NSE accents was higher than NNSE accents, which means they were more familiar with NSE accents.

## Questionnaire

As for accent preference, the Mean scores (M) showed all the three native English accent learning instrumental motivation (achieve a high score in an oral English test, get a well-paid job and succeed in a master admission for an interview for graduate students) are more than 4, which means their instrumental motivation in learning native English was high. Achieving a high score in an oral English test was the most significate motivation in acquiring NE accents, with 4.07 score.

For the attitudes towards English teachers' English accents, they preferred to be taught by an English teacher with AmE or BrE accent. Their evaluations to AmE and BrE were in the high level, with M=3.88 and M=3.77 respectively, while their evaluations to CE was in the

====================================================================
**Language in India** www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 20:9 September 2020**
Zhongyu Wang
A Study of English Accent: Attitudes of Chinese Undergraduate English-major Students in Southwest Forestry University in China          7

middle level which got M=2.82. However, their attitude towards an English teacher with SiE or ThE accent was negative (M=2.55, M=1.99 respectively). An English teacher was one of the main channels for participants to learn English accents, therefore, these data indicated that the participants may desired more to learn AmE and BrE accents from their English teachers.

Pleasantness, as a linguistic attractiveness, is a factor link to language attitudes. The mean score of BrE is 3.82, which means BrE was regarded as the most pleasant accent by participants, comparing with any other form of English. Subsequently, the M of AmE (3.71) is slightly less than BrE. However, their attitudes towards pleasant quality of CE, SiE and ThE were not so positive.

Their attitudes towards Standard English can reflect their linguistic awareness to WE. Respondents' evaluations of the statements that 'Received Pronunciation accent is a standard one' and 'General American accent is a standard one (M=3.61 and M=3.46) were at the high level which was more positive than that of CE, SiE and ThE (M=2. 4, M=2.35, M=1.98), which means they think RP and GA were Standard English rather than CE, SiE and ThE.

Linguistic behavior can also reflect language attitudes. In this aspect, BrE was the accent that participants preferred to learn, getting mean score (M=3.77), followed by AmE which was also rated highly by the participants (M=3.72). Ranking below it, CE was the third preferred learning English accent. In addition, participants hold a negative perspective on learning SiE and ThE (M=2.39 and M=1.95) (see Table 1). Their linguistic behavior matched the four dimensions above of their emotions about English varieties (BrE, AmE, CE, SiE, ThE), which shows that English accent attitudes are related to English learners' learning behavior. Both populations of participants who preferred to learn AmE and BrE were which were more than that of participants with the ability to identify them, which indicated that some students' standard English ideology lead to them preferred GA or RP even they cannot actually recognize them.

**Table 1** *English Accent Learning Preference*

| English accent learning preference | M | SD |
|---|---|---|
| I prefer to learn a British English accent | 3.77 | 0.946 |
| I prefer to learn an American English accent. | 3.72 | 0.903 |
| I prefer to learn a China English accent | 2.61 | 1.07 |
| I prefer to learn Singaporean English accent. | 2.39 | 0.999 |
| I prefer to learn a Thai English accent. | 1.95 | 1.127 |

According to the respondents' feedbacks, their words to describe own English accents

============================================================================

**Language in India** www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 20:9 September 2020**
Zhongyu Wang
A Study of English Accent: Attitudes of Chinese Undergraduate English-major Students in Southwest Forestry University in China          8

were classified into positive, neutral, negative and others. Most of participants adopted negative words such as 'not standard' 'terrible' 'poor' 'Chinglish' 'not fluent'. However, there were a few positive words such as 'nice and great' 'good' 'standard' 'native liked', while some neutral words 'not bad' 'received' 'middle level'. Meanwhile, there were some participants used contradictory words: 'clear and fluent, but the accent is not pleasant' 'fluent but with Chinese accent' 'good but not native, lack of native American English accent character'. Their descriptions reflected most of them hold a negative attitude towards their English accents for their Chinese accent or dialect accent.

Generally, the majority of respondents' satisfaction degrees were low, only approximate 20.83% of the population were satisfied with their own English accent, whereas 68% participants did not feel satisfied with their own English accents. When asked the reasons, 'Chinglish' 'not native' 'not standard' 'unintelligent' 'not fluent' 'with minority language accent' were the main responses. As for their reasons for satisfied, 'peers and teachers said my accent was good' 'native liked' 'fluent' 'can pronounce phonetic symbol correct' were the main answer. According to their answers, it seems like their desire to native Englishes and got rid of their own CE accent.

As for the participants' linguistic behavior about own English accent, the majority participants aspired to 'sound like a native speaker of English', with about 84.38% of them choose it. Subsequently, the participants who aspired keep their own accent was less, constituting 10.42%. Similarly, only two students did not care about their own accent, while 3 choose others (see Table 2).

**Table 2** *Aspired English Accent*

| Aspired English accent | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Sound like a native speaker of English. | 81 | 84.38% |
| Keep my own accent. | 10 | 10.42% |
| I do not care about my own English pronunciation. | 2 | 2.08% |
| Others, please specify | 3 | 3.13% |

**Semi-structure Interview**

As for the attitudes toward English varieties, almost participants had a positive attitude to BrE and AmE, and preferred native Englishes when speaking English, especially BrE and AmE. However, some of them considered English accents were the culture identities and

regarded different English accents were equal and acceptable. Their knowledge about language varieties, previous experience and their English-major identities were the main factors that shaped their language attitudes. As one of the participants Zhang said "*in the past, (I) thought the distinguish of different English accents was not obviously until oral interpretation teachers played variety of English accents to us to listen to.*"

Yuan Yanlin said, *"an English-major student, I will try to speak closer to native speakers to establish a good language environment for children (students).*"

He Liqun said. "*after I been to Thailand, I could accept it. Accents can reflect their culture.*"

Chinese undergraduate English-major students' perceptions of their own accent are complex and contradictory. On one hand, most of them were not satisfied with their own English accent and described it not standard and with Chinese or dialect accent. Even there was one satisfied with their own accent was for her native-like accent. On the other hand, half of them did not exclude to show their Chinese identities when speaking English. Meanwhile, some of them had already had the awareness of the culture identify and intelligibility priority principle in English communication, like Rao Fengqian said "*it does not have much influence, only if (they) can understand what I said and what I mean. I do not care if can be identified.*"

In addition, as for others' Chinese accent, most of them agreed with that, which means some of them hold a positive attitude to others' Chinese accent. For example, Yuan Yanlin said "*there is a distinguish between Chinese accent and NS accents, but fluency and expression ability are more important. However, not in case of affecting understanding.*"

A Naxi minority student concerned "*being with a Chinese accent was a great thing, because it represents the culture of the country.*"

**Discussion**
**RQ1: Ability to Identify English Varieties**
As for the RQ1 was the extent of Chinese undergraduate English-major students' ability to identify different English accents, on one hand, the reports from the listening test showed that AmE, BrE, CE and ThE can by identified respectively by most participants. On the other hand, when just distinguishing these accents belong to NSs or NNSs, the majority of them can identify them correctly, especially AmE and BrE (more than 80%). It revealed the

==============================================================================
**Language in India** www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 20:9 September 2020**
Zhongyu Wang
A Study of English Accent: Attitudes of Chinese Undergraduate English-major Students in Southwest Forestry University in China                    10

majority of Chinese students have been aware of the existence of English varieties, but are more familiar with AmE and BrE. Meanwhile, the results showed that some Chinese students lacked the ability to distinguish AmE with BrE, even they preferred AmE or BrE, which reflected their NS ideology, as Wong's (2018) found "there is a tendency of accent stereotyping and idealization of native English speech" (p. 181). This may be because they had more exposure to AmE and BrE through the social media and English learning material in China.

**RQ2: English Accent Preference**

The RQ2 was about preferred English accent of Chinese undergraduate English-major students will be discussed with the results from questionnaire and semi-structure interviews.

Similar with most results from researchers (Fang, 2016; Fang, 2017; Wong, 2018; Kung & Wang, 2018) on Chinese students' English accent attitudes, the majority of respondents showed a strong preference to learn AmE and BrE accents. As for NNSE accents, they showed a negative attitude, students considered them as 'non-native' and 'non-standard' accents. The SE ideology seems to be one of the main factors. This also reflected the NS ideology in China's society and English education facilitated their NS English accents learning preference (Kung and Wang, 2018). In addition, intelligibility of NS accents was the one of the reasons for their NS accent preference. However, there were also quite a few interviewees (50%) have another perspective and showed acceptable attitudes to NNSE accents. Culture identity of language, ELF context, communication efficiency and the difficulty to achieve NSE accents for NNSs were stated as issues by the students.

The results showed a transformation of participants' attitudes to English varieties. The social agent, English teachers, the changing learning discourse and social context were found to influence their attitudes. The English-major identity and the NSE norms used in English material lead to a few of participants became more wanted to have an NS accents. For students who became more acceptable to the NNSE accents, the teachers' accent in the beginning of learning English and the fact lacking the opportunity for exposure to NNSE accents in the past, as well as the increase of knowledge about English varieties and ELF communication experience at university lead to them being aware of the variety of English accents and culture identities.

**RQ3: Attitudes towards Own English Accent**

Not surprisingly, a large number of participants preferred their own accent to sound more like English NSs and had a negative attitude towards with own CE accents. This was also found

===================================================================
**Language in India** www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 20:9 September 2020**
Zhongyu Wang
A Study of English Accent: Attitudes of Chinese Undergraduate English-major Students in Southwest Forestry University in China          11

in Bian (2009), He and Li (2009) and Fang's (2017) research. 'Chinese accent' or a 'dialect accent' were regarded as the negative factors influencing their accents, which indicated that they may not evaluate their own accent objectively. They regarded the accents of NSs as the benchmark of English learning and did not consider themselves as WE or ELF users (Fang, 2017). There were 50% of interviewees who did not want to be identified as Chinese from their accent, which was similar with He and Li's (2009) findings (53.2%). English with Chinese accent was perceived as the non-standard and imperfect English, whereas AmE and BrE were regarded as the only legitimate English by participants, which reflected their SE ideology and lack of awareness of WE related to the ownership and English standard.

Fortunately, some of them (37.5%) did not mind to be identified as Chinese and most of them (75%) can accept others' Chinese accent. 'intelligibility priority' for communication efficiency 'culture identity' and the 'difficulties to dispense from a localized accent were the main reason. This was also found in He and Li (2009) and Fang' s (2017) findings that there was a tendency that Chinese student were more acceptable and tolerant to CE and began to rethink the value of NNS and NS accents in ELF communication.

## Conclusions

According to the research, there are some pedagogical implications. The SE ideology caused the participants had negative stereotypes towards their own accent and a preference for AmE and BrE. This ideology can be found in the pedagogical policy, English material, assessment system, even the attitude of teachers.

First, the social agents, English teachers and peers, played a crucial role in the processes of shaping learners' language ideology, especially at the beginning. Teachers should provide students with knowledge about WE and a positive feedback to learners' CE accent, encourage them to express their opinions in their accent with the precondition of intelligibility. Second, in pronunciation teaching, more ELF communication contexts should be developed for students to gain exposure to more English varieties and interact in English for effective ELF communication. Third, there is a need to introduce the features of CE accents to students so that they can be aware of the legitimate of CE accent and be more confident rather than embarrassed when they speak in their own English accent. At the last, the education policy somehow determines the teaching model and assessment system in China. Thus, the policy makers may should reset the English education policies after investigating students' and teachers' language attitudes, motivations and needs.

===================================================================
**Language in India** www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 20:9 September 2020**
Zhongyu Wang
A Study of English Accent: Attitudes of Chinese Undergraduate English-major Students in
Southwest Forestry University in China                     12

To summarized, the results reported that many Chinese undergraduate English-major students were aware of English varieties. A majority of them preferred AmE and BrE accents and hold a negative attitude to their own English accents in English teaching and learning context. At the same time, quite a few of them have been aware of the value of English varieties, culture identity and communication efficiency in ELF communication, despite the fact that they aspired to accents that sound like NS. This is accordance with Jenkins' (2005) findings that "the NNSs had an ambivalence" (p. 535) about their own accent. Their language ideology which was found to be formed with sociocultural factors such as teachers, materials, society and learning context may determine their language attitudes and learning behavior. As a guidance to English teachers, a greater awareness of English as a World Language and as a tool for communication in an international context would be among the outcomes from the questionnaire and interviews made in this study. As for the recommendations, accent can be influenced by many factors such as background, education, experience and contexts. For example, in Singapore, people who are Chinese-English bilinguals have different English accents with Indian-English or Malaysian-English bilinguals. Even in the UK the accents of people from different area can be different. If possible, more English accents should be adopted to explore participants' attitudes. What is more, the participants in this research came from a university which may cannot represent all the Chinese undergraduate English-major students in China. Participants from more universities or with different learning experiences could be used to explore the attitude of students towards accents in the future.

===================================================================

## References

Bian, Y. W. (2009). Chinese learners' identity in their attitudes towards English pronunciation / accents. *CELEA Journal (Bimonthly)*, 2009 (2), 66-74.

Bolton, K. (2003). *Chinese Englishes: A sociolinguistic history*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Crystal, D. (2003). English as a global language. (2n d ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Deterding, D. (2010). ELF-based pronunciation teaching in China. *Chinese Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 33 (6), 3-15.

Deterding, D., & Kirkpatrick, A. (2006). Emerging Southeast Englishes and Intelligibility. *World Englishes,* 25 (3/4), 391-409.

Fang, F. (2016). Investigating attitudes towards English accents from an ELF framework. *The Asian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 3-1, 68-80.

Fang, F. (2017). An investigation of attitudes towards English accents – A case study of a

===================================================================
Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 20:9 September 2020
Zhongyu Wang
A Study of English Accent: Attitudes of Chinese Undergraduate English-major Students in Southwest Forestry University in China          13

university in China. *Researching Chinese English: The State of the Art.* Springer International Publishing, 05, 141-156.

Foley, J. A. (2013). *Sociology of language. Bangkok:* Assumption University.

Galloway, N. & Rose, H. (2015). Introducing Global Englishes. New York: Routledge. https://www.routledge.com/Introducing-Global-Englishes/Galloway-Rose/p/book/9780415835329

Gao, X. (2010). *Strategic language learning: The role of agency and context.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Garrett, P. (2010). *Attitudes to language.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Görlach, M. (1990). *Studies in the History of the English Language.* Heidelberg: Carl Winter.

Haberland. H. (2011). Ownership and maintenance of a language in transnational use. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 937-949.

He, D., & Li, D. C. S. (2009). Language attitudes and linguistic features in the 'China English' debate. *World Englishes*, 70-89.

Holliday, A. (2005). *The struggle to teach English as an international language.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hu, X. (2004). Why China English should stand alongside British, American, and the other 'world Englishes'. *English Today*, 20(2), 26-33. doi: 10.1017/S0266078404002056

Jenkins, J. (2005). Implementing an international approach to English pronunciation: The role of teacher attitudes and identity. *TESOL Quarterly*, 39 (3), 535-543.

Jenkins, J. (2007). *English as a lingua franca: attitude and identity.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jenkins, J. (2009). English as a lingua franca: interpretations and attitudes. *World Englishes*, 28(2), 200-207.

Jiang, Y., & Du, R. (2003). Youguan 'zhongguo yingyu' de wenti (Issues on 'China English'). *Waiyu Jiaoxue (Foreign Language Education)* 24, 27–35.

Jiang, Y. J. (2002). China English: issues, studies and features. *Asian Englishes 5,* 4-23.

Kachru, B. B. (2005). *Asian Englishes: Beyond the canon.* Hong Kong, SAR, China: University of Hong Kong Press.

Kristiansen, T. (1991) *Sproglige Normidealer pâ Næstvedegnen. Kvantitative Sprogholdningsundersogelser.* Dissertation, University of Copenhagen.

Kung, F. W., & Wang, X. (2018). Exploring EFL learners' accent preferences for effective ELF communication. *RELC Journal.* 1 –14.

Kunschak, C., & Fang, F. (2008). Intelligibility, acceptability, target-likeness: teacher vs. student perspectives on the teaching of pronunciation within an EIL framework.

==================================================================
**Language in India** www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 20:9 September 2020**
Zhongyu Wang
A Study of English Accent: Attitudes of Chinese Undergraduate English-major Students in Southwest Forestry University in China                14

*Philippine Journal of Linguistic*s, 39, 1–13.

Li, D. C. S. (2006). Problematizing empowerment: on the merits and demerits of non-native models of English in the EIL curriculum. *SOUTHEAST ASIA: A Multidisciplinary Journal 6*(1), 12-31.

Li, S. L. (2016). A contrastive study of english source text and back-translation version and its application. *Sino-US English Teaching,* 13(10), 814-821.

Li, Y. Y. (2019). China English or Chinese English: Reviewing the China English movement through the Kachruvian lens. *English Today*, 35(2), 3-12.

McArthur, T. (1985). *An ABC of World English*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Margie, B. (2011). 'Chineseness and world Englishes.' *Paper presented at the 16ᵗʰ Annual World Congress of Applied Linguistics*, 1–11.

Rubin, H.J. & Rubin, I.S. (2012). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications. https://books.google.co.th/books?id=T5RDmYuueJAC&printsec=frontcover&hl=zh-TW#v=onepage&q&f=false

Strevens, P. (1980). *Teaching English as an international language: from practice to principle.* Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Timmis, I. (2012). Native-Speaker Norms and International English: A Classroom View. *ELT Journal*, 56, 240-24.

Wang, Y. (2015). *Research on the Attitudes of Chinese English-Major Students toward the Native-English-Speaker Accent.* M.A. Thesis. Hebei: Hebei University of Science and Technology.

Wong, R. (2018). Non-native EFL teachers' perception of English accent in teaching and learning: Any preference? *Theory and Practice in Language Studies,* 8(2):177.

Yano, Y. (2001). World Englishes in 2000 and beyond. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-971X.00204

====================================================================

**Appendix 1**

## Listening Test

## (英语语音听力任务)

In this section, there are five different English recordings. At the end of each recording, you should finish a verbal guise test and the guess the home country of the speaker.


(以下您将听到五个不同人士的英语录音。每一个录音最后，请完成一个辨音测试并评

====================================================================

**Language in India** www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 20:9 September 2020**
Zhongyu Wang
A Study of English Accent: Attitudes of Chinese Undergraduate English-major Students in Southwest Forestry University in China          15

估说话者所属的国勾画。)

<div align="center">

Speaker 1

</div>

Guess the home country or area of the speaker. Choose one and tick the box. (推测说话者所属的国家。选择一个并勾画选框。)

☐ America 美国　　☐ Britain 英国　　　☐ Singapore 新加坡

☐ China 中国　　☐ Thailand 泰国　　　☐ other(s) 其它_____

<div align="center">

Speaker 2

</div>

Guess the home country or area of the speaker. Choose one and tick the box. (推测说话者所属的国家。选择一个并勾画选框。)

☐ America 美国　　☐ Britain 英国　　　☐ Singapore 新加坡

☐ China 中国　　☐ Thailand 泰国　　　☐ other(s) 其它_____

.
.
.
.
.
.

**Appendix 2**

<div align="center">

**Questionnaire on English accent Attitudes**

**(英语口音态度调查)**

*Part 1: Background data (第一部分：个人背景资料)*

</div>

*Please fill in the following information about yourself. All personal responses will remain anonymous and will be included for research purposes only.*

=================================================================================
**Language in India** www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 20:9 September 2020**
Zhongyu Wang
A Study of English Accent: Attitudes of Chinese Undergraduate English-major Students in Southwest Forestry University in China　　　　16

*(请在下方填写你的个人信息。请注意: 所有的回答都以匿名形式并且仅会以研究目的使用)。*

**Age (年龄):**  ☐  18 to 22  ☐  23-30  ☐  31-40

**Age when starting to learn English (开始学习英语的时间)**:

☐  Kindergarten (幼儿园) ☐  primary (小学) ☐  secondary (中学) ☐  university (大学)

**Experience abroad (please skip the question if you do not have experience abroad):**
**(国外的经历,如果没有请跳过)**

☐Travel (旅游)  ☐study (学习)  ☐work(工作)  ☐conference(会议)

☐  others, please specify (其他原因,请注明)

**Where (地点):**  _____

**Length (时长):** ☐less than a month(少于一个月) ☐1 to 6 months (一到六个月)  ☐6 months to a year (六个月到年)  ☐more than a year(多于一年)

**Your native language/dialects? (你的母语或方言）**  _____

**Other languages/dialects? (其他语言或方言)** _____

### *Part 2:  Accent preference (第二部分：口音偏好)*

*In this section, there are twenty-three statements in relation to English accents. Please answer the following questions according to a scale from 1 to 5, and write your answer in the box after each statement. Example: 5= strongly agree, 4= agree, 3= not sure, 2= disagree, 1= strongly disagree.*

(此部分有 23 个关于英语口音的问题。请回答这些问题, 按照 1 到 5 的等级为每

题打分, 并把相应的答案写在每题之后的方框里。例如: 5=特别不同意,  4=同意,3=不

==================================================================================
**Language in India** www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 20:9 September 2020**
Zhongyu Wang
A Study of English Accent: Attitudes of Chinese Undergraduate English-major Students in Southwest Forestry University in China                    17

确定 2=同意,1=特别不同意。)

| Number (题号) | statement(陈述) | Strongly agree (特别同意) (5) | Agree (同意) (4) | Not sure (不确定) (3) | Disagree (不同意) (2) | Strongly disagree (特别不同意) (1) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | I prefer to learn a British English accent （我喜欢学习英国英语的发音。） | | | | | |
| 2 | I prefer to learn an American English accent. (我喜欢学习美国英语的发音。) | | | | | |
| 3 | I prefer to learn a China English accent (我喜欢学习中国英语的发音。) | | | | | |
| 4 | I prefer to learn Singaporean English accent. | | | | | |

======================================================================
**Language in India** www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 20:9 September 2020**
Zhongyu Wang
A Study of English Accent: Attitudes of Chinese Undergraduate English-major Students in Southwest Forestry University in China            18

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | (我喜欢学新加坡<br><br>英语的发音。) | | | | |
| 5 | I prefer to learn Thai English accent.<br><br>(我喜欢学泰国英<br><br>语的发音。) | | | | |
| 6 | To acquire a native-like English accent is helpful for me to achieve a high score in an oral English test.<br><br>(习得一口类似英<br><br>语本族者的口音<br><br>有助于我在口语<br><br>测试中取得高<br><br>分。) | | | | |
| 7 | To acquire a native-like English accent is helpful in getting a well-paid job.<br><br>(习得一口类似英<br><br>语本族语的口音 | | | | |

=====================================================================

**Language in India** www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 20:9 September 2020**
Zhongyu Wang
A Study of English Accent: Attitudes of Chinese Undergraduate English-major Students in Southwest Forestry University in China                    19

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 有助于找到一份高薪的工作。) | | | | | |
| 8 | To acquire a native-like English accent is helpful for me to succeed in an admission for a interview for graduate students. (习得一口类似于英语本族语者的口音有助于我通过研究生的入学面试。) | | | | | |
| 9 | I prefer to be taught by an English teacher with a British English accent. (我喜欢有英式口音的英语教师教授英语。) | | | | | |
| 10 | I prefer to be taught by an English teacher with an American English accent. | | | | | |

===============================================================

**Language in India** www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 20:9 September 2020**
Zhongyu Wang
A Study of English Accent: Attitudes of Chinese Undergraduate English-major Students in Southwest Forestry University in China        20

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | (我喜欢有美式口音的英语教师教授英语。) | | | | | |
| 11 | I prefer to be taught by an English teacher with a China English accent. (我喜欢有中国口音的英语教师教授英语.) | | | | | |
| 12 | I prefer to be taught by an English teacher with a Singaporean English accent. (我喜欢有新加坡口音的英语教师教授英语。) | | | | | |
| 13 | I prefer to be taught by an English teacher with a Thai English accent. (我喜欢有泰国口音的英语教师教授英语。) | | | | | |

=====================================================================

**Language in India** www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 20:9 September 2020**
Zhongyu Wang
A Study of English Accent: Attitudes of Chinese Undergraduate English-major Students in Southwest Forestry University in China          21

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14 | British English accent sounds more pleasant, compared with that of any other forms of English accents. (和其他口音比较，英国英语的口音听起来更悦耳。) | | | | | |
| 15 | American English accent sounds more pleasant, compared with that of any other forms of English accents. (和其他口音比较，美国英语的口音听起来更悦耳。) | | | | | |
| 16 | China English accent sounds more pleasant, compared with that of any other forms of English accents. （和其他口音比较，中国英语的较，中国英语的 | | | | | |

==================================================================================
**Language in India** www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 20:9 September 2020**
Zhongyu Wang
A Study of English Accent: Attitudes of Chinese Undergraduate English-major Students in Southwest Forestry University in China　　　　　22

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 口音听起来更悦<br><br>耳。) | | | | | |
| 17 | Singapore English accent sounds more pleasant, compared with that of any other forms of English accents.<br><br>(和其他口音比<br><br>较，新加坡英语<br><br>的口音听起来更<br><br>悦耳。) | | | | | |
| 18 | Thai English accent sounds more pleasant, compared with that of any other forms of English accents.<br><br>　(和其他口音比<br><br>较，泰国英语的<br><br>口音听起来更悦<br><br>耳。) | | | | | |
| 19 | Received Pronunciation accent is a standard ones<br><br>(英国标准英语的 | | | | | |

===============================================================

**Language in India** www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 20:9 September 2020**
Zhongyu Wang
A Study of English Accent: Attitudes of Chinese Undergraduate English-major Students in Southwest Forestry University in China　　　　　23

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 口音是标准口音。) | | | | |
| 20 | General American English accent is a standard one. (通用美国英语的口音是标准口音。) | | | | |
| 21 | China English accent is a standard one. (中国英语的口音是标准口音。) | | | | |
| 22 | Singaporean English accent is a standard one. (新加坡英语的口音是标准口音。) | | | | |
| 23 | Thai English accent is a standard one. (泰国英语的口音是标准口音。) | | | | |

**_Part three: Attitudes towards own English accent _(第三部分：自我英语口音态度)**

===============================================================
**Language in India** www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 20:9 September 2020**
Zhongyu Wang
A Study of English Accent: Attitudes of Chinese Undergraduate English-major Students in Southwest Forestry University in China                    24

*Please answer all the following questions about English accents according to your own understanding and beliefs. There is no right or wrong answer. Additional comments are welcome. You can answer in either English or Chinese. (请根据你自己的了解和想法回答以下所有关于英语口音的问题。 答案没有对错之分。 如果可以，请解释你填写的回答或提供你的看法。)*

Please use **some words** to describe your **own** English accent（请用几个词描述你自己的英语口音。)

_____

How do you feel about your **own** English accent? （你对你自己的英语口音作何评价?)

☐ Not satisfied at all（十分不满意）　☐ Not very satisfied（不是很满意)

☐ Uncertain（无法确定）　☐ Satisfied（满意）　☐ Very satisfied（很满意)

Any reason why (请解释): _____

_____

What kind of English accent would you like to **aspire to**? ( 你期待达到什么样的英语口音?)

☐ Sound like a native speaker of English. （像英语为本族语的人一样的口音。)

☐ Keep my own accent. （保持我白己的英语口音。)

☐ I do not care about my own English pronunciation. （我不在乎我的英语发音。)

☐ Others, please specify (其他,请注明): _____

_____

If you are interested in this study, and want to take part in the next interview, please leave your name and contact information. (如果你对此项研究感兴趣，并且希望参加下一步的访谈，请留下你的姓名和联系方式。)

=================================================================
**Language in India** www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 20:9 September 2020**
Zhongyu Wang
A Study of English Accent: Attitudes of Chinese Undergraduate English-major Students in Southwest Forestry University in China　　　25

Name(姓名):_____          Telephone  number(电话号码):_____

WeChat(微信):_____

**Thank you very much for your help!**

**非常感谢您的参与!**


**Appendix 3**

**Interview questions**

1.  What English accent do you prefer when you speak English? Why?

    在你说英语的时候你喜欢使用哪种口音,为什么?

2.  What's your attitude towards different English accents?

    你怎么看待不同的英语口音?

3.  Did you ever change your attitude towards English accents? why?

    你曾今是否改变过对英语口音的态度?为什么?

4.  What is your attitude towards your own English accent? why?

    你对你自己的英语口音态度是什么?为什么?

5.  Do you want to let other people know that you are Chinese when speaking English? Why?

    在你说英语的时候你想让别人知道你是中国人吗?为什么?

6.  If you feel that someone speaks English with a China accent, what do you think about that?

    当一个人说英语时带有中国口音,你怎么看?

========================================================

============================================================================
**Language in India** www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 20:9 September 2020**
Zhongyu Wang
A Study of English Accent: Attitudes of Chinese Undergraduate English-major Students in Southwest Forestry University in China                26